

REMARKS

The Examiner's action and the references cited therein have been carefully considered. For the reasons which follow, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw all objections and all grounds of rejection over prior art.

Initially, in Paragraphs 6 and 7 of the office action, the Examiner objects to the abstract because it allegedly does not commence on a separate sheet. The basis for this objection is not clear to applicant. The English language version of the international application, as filed, contained fourteen (14) pages. Pages 1-11 comprise the specification, pages 12-13 comprise original claims 1-10 (prior to amendment in the concurrently filed Preliminary Amendment) and page 14 standing alone comprises the Abstract. Thus, the Abstract has at all times commenced on a separate sheet. For this reason, applicant does not understand this objection. A copy of page 14 is submitted herewith in the event the application which reached the Examiner omitted this page or the electronic version of the application combined this page with another. In any event, as filed, the Abstract appeared alone on page 14 and, therefore, this ground of objection should be withdrawn. Next, in Paragraph 8 of the office action, the Examiner suggests specification arrangement guidelines for applicant's use. However, in the Preliminary Amendment filed with the application, on page 2 thereof, applicant had already amended the specification to conform to these guidelines. For the Examiner's information, a copy of the Preliminary Amendment is also submitted herewith. Again, this ground of objection should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 1, 8 and 9 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Rabne et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,006,332), the Examiner stating that Rabne teaches each and every element recited in the rejected claims. This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons set forth hereinafter.

The present invention provides a conditional access component that includes several software items, each referred to as a conditional access system and each being directed to a particular access system. By conditional access system, it is meant a proprietary security system pertaining to the valuable content distributed by a content provider. Each provider does its own message format, message organization and the conditional access component is the interface between a host apparatus receiving and processing the audio/visual content and the security module. The messages are embedded in the data stream, extracted by the host

and forwarded to the conditional access component. Depending upon the conditional access system, the messages are processed according to the particular security module attached to the conditional access component.

The primary feature of the present invention is to store several conditional access systems in a single conditional access component, whereby the user, upon acquiring a license for a particular provider's content, can selectively enable that provider's conditional access system in the conditional access component. In this manner only a single device is required for an end-user to consume services from several conditional access systems as contrasted, for example, with prior practice wherein each provider's conditional access system was linked to its own hardware. To date, an important problem encountered with the provision of such a single access component is that a license fee is required at the time that each conditional access system is acquired and installed. Thus, for an end-user to install multiple conditional access systems in order to have the flexibility to consume services from any one of several providers, it would have to pay the license fee "up-front" for each system and before it knew whether or not it would ever elect to selectively enable that system. In accordance with the present invention, several conditional access systems are installed in the conditional access component, but are disabled, and do not become activated until the end-user elects to activate any particular system by paying the necessary license fee and acquiring the required license. Rejected claim 1 recites that particular conditional access systems are loaded on the conditional access component, the systems are disabled, and a license is acquired for a particular system after which the system is enabled subject to a successful verification of the license. Rejected claims 8 and 9 recite a conditional access component having a basic functionality common to a plurality of different conditional access systems, a memory for storing specific application software that constitutes a particular conditional access system in conjunction with the basic functionality, the particular conditional access system being initially disabled when the application is loaded into the memory, and means for selectively enabling the particular conditional access system by acquiring a license and subject to a successful verification of the license.

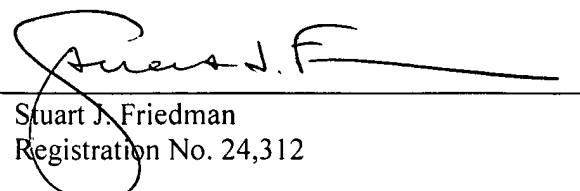
The elements of claims 1, 8 and 9 are not disclosed by Rabne et al. Specifically Rabne et al fails to disclose a preloaded conditional access component wherein the preloaded systems are disabled until a purchase action, such as acquiring a license, is performed and wherein means are provided for selectively enabling at least one of the preloaded systems

subject to successful verification of the license. Rather, Rabne et al disclose that the software components loaded in the launch pad are ready for use when they detect a compatibility with the currently accessed service. In case that the software component is not stored in the launch pad, a download is performed to load the appropriate component. The license described in Rabne et al aims at controlling the use of the software component downloaded in the launch pad. This license is used when the launch pad is remotely connected with the RM server, i.e., when the software is loaded, and the software is enabled when it is loaded. See, column 8, lines 13-15 disclosing that the licenses are stored in the RM server for further verification. Rabne et al does not disclose preloading software access systems in a conditional access component, which systems are disabled when installed, and which may be selectively enabled by the end user by acquiring a license, which is verified by the system. Accordingly, Rabne et al not only does not disclose essential elements of the rejected claims, but also it is directed to a different concept. Therefore, claims 1, 8 and 9 are allowable.

Claims 2-7 and 10 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rabne et al in view of Kamperman et al, the Examiner stating that Kamperman et al or Kamperman et al and Rabne et al discloses the particular recitations in each dependent claim. Even if, arguendo, this were true, it remains the case that neither Rabne et al nor Rabne et al in view of Kamperman et al disclose or suggest the essential features of claims 1 and 8 discussed above. Therefore, even if the recitations of claims 2-7 and 10 were disclosed, as asserted by the Examiner, no combination of the cited disclosures can amount to any of claims 2-7 and 10 when it is appreciated that Rabne et al is grossly deficient in disclosing the essential features and invention of the independent claims. Claims 2-7 and 10 are allowable at least because they depend from allowable claims 1 and 8.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of all of the prior art grounds for rejection is respectfully urged and an early Notice of Allowance directed to claims 1-10 is courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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PATENT
Docket No. 740612-189

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:)
Christophe GENEVOIS) Group Art Unit: Not yet assigned
Serial No. Not Yet Assigned) Examiner: Not Yet Assigned.
International Appln. No. PCT/EP03/03856
International Filing Date: April 14, 2003
Filed: October 12, 2004)
For: CONDITIONAL ACCESS NETWORK)

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Please preliminarily amend the above-captioned application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please insert as a centered heading, prior to page 1, line 9:

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

Please insert as a centered heading, prior to page 1, line 17:

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Please insert as a centered heading, prior to page 2, line 5:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Please insert as a centered heading, prior to page 3, line 7:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Please insert as a centered heading, prior to page 3, line 24:

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 7-8 and 10 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a conditional access network wherein providers distribute valuable contents over the network and end-users are allowed to access such valuable contents in function of individual access rights, characterized in that the valuable contents are being made available to the end-users by way of a plurality of different conditional access systems, comprising the steps of:

providing end-users ~~are provided~~ with a generic conditional access component having a basic functionality common to all conditional access systems[[],];

loading ~~several~~ particular conditional access systems ~~are loaded~~ on the conditional access components component [[],];

initially disabling the particular conditional access systems thus loaded on the component ~~are initially disabled~~ [[],];

acquiring a license ~~is acquired~~ for a particular conditional access system and enabling the conditional access system ~~is enabled~~ subject to a successful verification of the license.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the valuable contents are distributed in a digital transport stream that contains Entitlement Management Messages “EMMs” specific to each conditional access system.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein each conditional access component includes a filter unit for filtering out the specific EMMs of conditional access systems enabled on the component and a verifier unit for the verification of access rights defined by the filtered specific EMMs.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the valuable contents in the transport

stream are scrambled, each conditional access component has a descrambler adapted to process a scrambled transport stream into a clear transport stream, and the descrambler is enabled or disabled in function of a successful or unsuccessful verification, respectively, of the access rights.

5. (Original) The method of any of claims 1 to 4, wherein each conditional access system has an associated application for execution by the conditional access component.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein applications are downloaded over the network from a conditional access application provider.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~any of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the network includes service channels for the transmission of configuration data to the conditional access components.

8. (Currently Amended) A conditional access component for use in a conditional access network wherein a provider distributes valuable contents over the network and end-users are allowed to access such valuable contents in function of individual access rights defined by a user license, characterized by comprising a basic functionality common to a plurality of different conditional access systems used in the network, a non-volatile memory for storing specific application software that constitutes a particular conditional access system in conjunction with the basic functionality, the particular conditional access system being initially disabled when the specific application is loaded in the non-volatile memory, means for acquiring a license for the particular conditional access system, and means for selectively enabling the particular conditional access system subject to a successful verification of a corresponding license.

9. (Original) The conditional access component of claim 8, comprising a memory for storing at least one conditional access application associated with a particular conditional access system and means for loading said application into said memory.

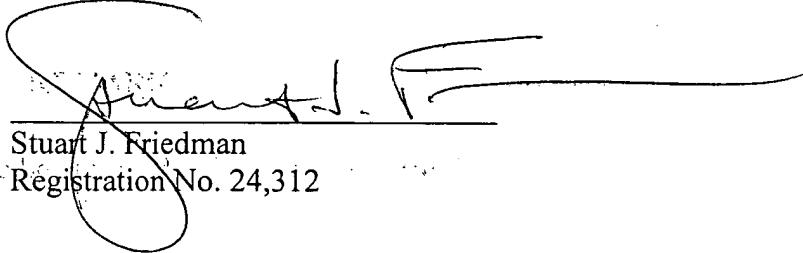
10. (Currently Amended) The conditional access component of claim 8 or claim 9,
wherein the valuable contents being are distributed in a digital transport stream that
contains Entitlement Management Messages “EMMs” specific to each conditional access
system, and comprising a filter unit for filtering out specific EMMs of conditional access
systems enabled on the component and a verifier unit for the verification of access rights
defined by the filtered specific EMMs.

REMARKS

The original PCT claims have been amended in order to correct improper multiple dependencies.

It is believed that claims 1-10 presently on file are in condition for examination and examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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